

Washington FAMILY

washingtonFAMILY.com

NOVEMBER 2019

GUIDES
PRESCHOOLS,
MONTESSORI &
OPEN HOUSES

gratitude

MAKING IT A DAILY PRACTICE

◁ WESTMINSTER SCHOOL ▷

SEE PAGE 9

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Preschool years = pre-reading years. **Page 40**

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Westminster School Students
Photo by David Stuck

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READERS' RESPONSES

We welcome your feedback — on specific articles, overall themes and anything else related to editorial content. Enter your comments on the Feedback tab of our website: info@washingtonfamily.com.

Please note we reserve the right to edit or refrain from publishing comments we deem inappropriate.

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YOUR
FEEDBACK**

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—John Anthony, retired judge



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—Richard Connema, Broadway critic

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Single Page
Design



Calendar of
Events



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Feeling Grateful ... and Pies

Gratitude has become the platitude for this parenting generation. It makes sense, as we live more in our phones and paradoxically less connected to each other. Feeling grateful is the way we Instagram-proof our expectations and get real about what we really have.

But how do we convey this message to our children? Writer PJ Feinstein digs into the daily benefits of gratitude and how we can make it a regular family practice — and not just on Thanksgiving.

Speaking of gratitude, we at *Washington Family*, *Baltimore's Child* and *Frederick's Child* feel most fortunate to have worked with *Washington Family's* longtime editor Britni Petersen. Britni always knew what parents wanted to talk about and what they wanted to see in this magazine. After a decade in the D.C. area, she has now returned to her home state of Texas. We will miss her but are excited to announce that PJ Feinstein will be coming aboard as editor starting with our next issue. PJ is a mother of two and another great voice in

our community. We look forward to having her as part of our magazine family.

Did you know we are about to enter pie season? Between Thanksgiving and the end of the year, Americans are positively pie crazy, and writer Michelle Blanchard Ardillo talks with four families across the Mid-Atlantic who have made this crusty dessert their career. Read about the ways they mix business and eating pleasure, and then go online for a foolproof crust recipe from Nic Romano of DaddyBoy Bake Shop. Enjoy!

Our resident preschool expert, Zibby Andrews, a former early childhood educator and current busy grandmother, shares the pre-reading possibilities and fun that parents can have with their preschoolers.

Finally, we have a roundup of turkey trots around the region.

Happy Thanksgiving to your family from all of us at *Washington Family*! ■

Jessica

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Maryland:

Sunday, February 9, 2020
Noon-4pm
Westfield Montgomery Mall

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Washington FAMILY

{ november }

FRIDAY 1

FREE Friday Fun

It's time for some Friday fun! Every first Friday, families can enjoy movies, music, dance or books while also making friends with others in the community. Contact the library for specific activities. Chinn Park Regional Library, Price William, Va., 10:30 a.m. pwcgov.org

SATURDAY 2

'Matilda the Musical'

Other Voices Theatre presents Roald Dahl's "Matilda the Musical", which tells the story of a brilliant girl with newly discovered powers who uses her abilities and intelligence to take a dramatic and positive stand in her life. The Performing Arts Factory, Frederick, Md., 8 p.m. \$18-\$22. othervoices theatre.org

SUNDAY 3

FREE Reading to Dogs

Did you know that dogs love books, too? Children can practice their reading skills by reading aloud to a therapy dog at the library. For readers in grades K- 5. Attendees can bring their own book or read one from the library. Chinn Park Regional Library, Prince William, Va., 1 p.m. pwcgov.org

MONDAY 4

FREE Funday Monday

Make Monday less than boring with a day full of crafts, music, movement and fun. Organizations like Mr. Skip, My Gym and Paint Your Own Pottery will be in attendance. Old Town Hall, Fairfax, Va., 10:30 a.m. fairfaxva.gov

TUESDAY 5

Baby Storytime

Storytimes are great for developing children's reading and pre-reading skills as well as their imaginations. The library's

storytimes include short stories, action rhymes, songs and fingerplays. Independent Hill Neighborhood Library, Manassas, Va., 10:30 a.m. pwcgov.org

WEDNESDAY 6

FREE Musical Storytime

For little musical lovers, this musical storytime is a must. Barnes & Noble is partnering with Crescendo Studios to combine book and music together to get kids excited about reading. Barnes & Noble (Mosaic District), Fairfax, Va., 11 a.m. barnesandnoble.com

FREE Sensory Yoga

While all children are welcome, this beneficial yoga program is geared toward kids with autism. It aims at helping kids with their sensory skills as well as helping to strengthen their mind-body connections. Grades K-6 with caregiver. Montclair Community Library, Dumfries, Va., 5:45 p.m. pwcgov.org

THURSDAY 7

'Edward Albee's Occupant'

In this production, a little Jewish girl from Russia immigrates to the U.S. and becomes the renowned sculptor Louise Nevelson. Diving deep into her world and getting to witness her mental struggles and career triumphs, the audience will leave with a better understanding of this famous artist's mind and how she became a free-thinking woman who inspired many. Theater J, Washington, D.C., 8 p.m. \$34-\$64. theaterj.org.

FRIDAY 8

Northern Virginia Christmas Show

With more than 250 fine artisans, this award-winning holiday show is the perfect way to kick off the Christmas season. Browse through tons of fine arts, pottery, jewelry, photography, fiber arts and more to find the perfect Christmas gift for your loved ones. Dulles Expo Center, Chantilly, Va., 10 a.m. \$8. dullesexpo.com

SATURDAY 9

'Taj Express'

Think about those magical Indian Bollywood movies and that's what this performance delivers. "Taj Express" follows the story of one man's passion and another's genius and is packed with all kinds of joy, theatrics and fun. The spectacular dance numbers and music will have you smiling and dancing along. Center for the Arts, Fairfax, Va., 8 p.m. \$29-\$48. cfa.gmu.edu

SUNDAY 10

'The Four Seasons'

Enjoy this reimagined version of the beloved "The Four Seasons." Led my music director and violinist Daniel Hope, he pairs Vivaldi's iconic masterpiece with neo-classical composer Max Richter's piece, "Recomposed." Center for the Arts, Fairfax, Va., 2 p.m. \$29-\$48. cfa.gmu.edu

DISNEY'S 'NEWSIES' FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15



Don't miss out on seeing this Tony-Award-winning musical! In the summer of 1899, the New York newsboys took on two of the most powerful men in the country, Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst, and won. Based on true events, this musical inspires audiences to stand up for what is right and let their voices be heard. Arena Stage, Washington, D.C., 8 p.m. \$92. arenastage.org



Why Outdoor Play Should Be a Part of Every Child's Day

As the temperatures drop, children will likely spend more and more time indoors. Outdoor play is just as critical in the fall and winter as it is in the spring and summer. In fact, studies show that children perform better in school and are physically and mentally healthier when they enjoy the great outdoors. Children develop creativity and learn how to overcome boredom on their own when they experience nature and find ways to entertain themselves outside. Dr. Claire McCarthy, Faculty Editor of Harvard Health Publishing points out the benefits to executive skills, "These are the skills that help us plan, prioritize, troubleshoot, negotiate, and multitask; they are crucial for our success. Creativity falls in here, too, and using our imagination to problem-solve and entertain ourselves. These are skills that must be learned and practiced — and to do this, children need unstructured time. They need time alone and with other children, and to be allowed (perhaps forced) to make up their own games, figure things out, and amuse themselves. Being outside gives them opportunities to practice these important life skills."

With the increasing obsession with electronic devices and screens, and the typical

family's busy schedule, it is more challenging now than ever for parents to find time for outdoor activities on a regular basis. Therefore, the ideal solution is that a child spends some time outside at school every day. At Westminster School in Annandale, VA, children enjoy recess once or twice every day depending on the grade level and all students have PE class every day. If it's a cold day, children bundle up and head outside to play on the playground or field, or they go for a nice walk around the campus. The cold is not an excuse to stay inside; in fact, the crisp air is invigorating! Only in the most extreme temperatures or weather conditions will Westminster students have indoor recess. Team sports are offered beginning in the 5th grade, which provides the students additional exercise, and which instills the value of teamwork and winning/losing with grace. Optional after-school sports enrichment is offered to the younger students.

Westminster offers an outward-bound program to students in grades 4-8. These experiences challenge the students to work together in teams to to overcome physical and intellectual challenges. Children go rock climbing, canoeing, camping, and zip lining. In addition to the

physical benefits of this program, there are mental benefits as well, since the children must work in teams to solve problems. For instance, how will a team get every person over a six-foot wall without the use of a ladder?

Westminster recommends that all children take a break after school and play outside before beginning their homework. This outdoor play provides a pause from the focused attention at school and gets the blood pumping to the brain, reenergizing the children for the time they will spend on their homework. While parents may be reluctant to give up the time prior to homework/study time, Westminster says that the 20-30 minutes outside will pay dividends when a more focused student can complete his homework in a timely manner.

Many schools have cut back on the amount of recess and PE students receive in a week, in favor of more technology classes. Westminster, however, remains resolute in its commitment to daily play, recognizing that outdoor activities are beneficial to students in countless ways and must be part of the everyday life of a child. ■



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Do you and your kids loves to sing and dance? If so, then it's time to head to D.C. for a live performance with KIDZ BOP. The show will feature today's top hits sung by kids along with an overall interactive experience. DAR Constitution Hall, Washington, D.C., 4 p.m. \$25-\$55. dar.org

TUESDAY 12

FREE Preschool Playdate: Happy Birthday USMC!

It's USMC's birthday! Preschool students are invited to a birthday celebration that includes storytimes, sing-a-longs and fun crafts. For ages 5 and under. National Museum of the Marine Corps, Triangle, Va., 10 a.m. usmcmuseum.com

Matinee Idylls: Brass 5

Since 1982, the Brass 5 has performed more than 4,000

concerts around the U.S. and Europe. Get the chance to see them live with a mesmerizing performance that is both lively and playful. Hylton Performing Arts Center, Manassas, Va., 12:30 p.m. \$29-\$49. cvpa.gmu.edu

WEDNESDAY 13

FREE Baby Storytime

Storytimes are great for developing children's reading and pre-reading skills as well as their imaginations. The library's storytimes include short stories, action rhymes, songs and fingerplays. Bull Run Regional Library, Manassas, Va., 10:30 a.m. pwcgov.org

THURSDAY 14

FREE Family Craft Night

Craftmaking is way more fun when it involves the entire family. Head to the library for some creative family-inspired

crafts. Chinn Park Regional Library, Prince William, Va., 7 p.m. pwcgov.org

FRIDAY 15

Daddy-Daughter Date Night

Make precious memories with your daugh'ters by enjoying a night out of music, dancing, snacks, games and more. Also, go home with some timeless photos taken in the photo booth. The Zen Lounge, Manassas, Va., 6:30 p.m. \$7-\$25.

SATURDAY 16

Virginia Opera: 'Il Postino'

Have a parents' night out at the opera. Enjoy a production of Mexican composer Daniel Catn's tragic-comedic opera "Il Postino". The Center for Arts describes "Il Postino" as a "universal story of love longed for, and won, featuring an opulent score with arias, duets, and tonal music

paying homage to Puccini." Center for the Arts, Fairfax, Va., 8 p.m. \$40-\$110. cfa.gmu.edu

SUNDAY 17

Disney Junior Holiday Party

Sing and dance along to Disney Junior song favorites as well as holiday classics with Disney friends including Mickey & Minnie Mouse, the Puppy Dog Pals, Vampirina and more. Warner Theatre, Washington, D.C., 3 p.m. \$33-\$53. warnertheatre.com

MONDAY 18

FREE Make-and-Take Mondays

Have an artistic afternoon with your little one creating unique crafts. Instructions and materials will be provided. Central Community Library, Manassas, Va., 6:30 p.m. pwcgov.org

The Kennedy Center



Egg-tion HERO

A special show from the Netherlands for the very young

See that egg? The one in the museum gallery guarded by two boring attendants? It's very expensive and no one is allowed to touch it. But just when the job of these attendants starts to feel extra boring, they're needed more than ever! Will they succeed at keeping the egg safe? Join Dutch theater/dance company Maas in a charming production for young audiences featuring miming actors, a chase scene, and a hysterically egg-cellent time.

Nov. 9 & 10
Studio F at the REACH

Age 3+



NSO Family Concert *Peter and Friends*

Inspired by Sergei Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*, this concert developed specifically for toddlers is sure to have audience members playing like ducks, catching a wicked wolf, and engaging with music all along the way! This wild adventure features actors, puppets, and a quintet of woodwind and brass musicians from the National Symphony Orchestra, presented in collaboration with Atlanta, Georgia's Teller Productions.

Come early for a Musical Instrument "Petting Zoo"

Ages: Infant to 5+

Nov. 23 & 24
Studio F at the REACH



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Written by **Mo Willems** and **Mr. Warburton**

Music by **Deborah Wicks La Puma**

Choreographed by **Jessica Hartman**

Dramaturgy by **Megan Alrtuz**

Directed by **Jerry Whiddon**

Whatever you do, don't let the Pigeon star in his own musical production! It's not easy being the Pigeon—you never get to do ANYTHING! But when the Bus Driver has a crisis that threatens to make her passengers (gasp!) late, maybe that wily bird CAN do something. Starring an innovative mix of actors, puppets, songs, and feathers, *Don't Let The Pigeon Drive the Bus! (The Musical)* is sure to get everyone's wings flapping.

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TUESDAY 19

FREE Baby Storytime

Storytimes are great for developing children's reading and pre-reading skills as well as their imaginations. The library's storytimes include short stories, action rhymes, songs and fingerplays. Potomac Community Library, Woodbridge, Va., 10:15 a.m. pwcgov.org

WEDNESDAY 20

'Superpower Dogs' Film

"Superpower Dogs" is a documentary about six real-life working dogs from around the world who brave all kinds of natural disasters and help save lives in a variety of situations. This family-friendly film aims to help viewers discover everything that makes these types of dogs so remarkable. National Museum of the Marine Corps, Triangle, Va., 10 a.m. \$8-\$11. usmcmuseum.com

FREE Toddler Music & Motion

It's time to clap, stomp, dance and sing. Each Music & Motion session offers a variety of music-related and movement activities for kids ages 1 to 3. Potomac Community Library, Woodbridge, Va., 10:30 a.m. pwcgov.org

THURSDAY 21

FREE Lego Club

There are so many ways to enjoy Legos. Come out to the library for some Lego-building fun for grades K-5. Dale City Neighborhood Library, Dale City, Va., 4:30 p.m. pwcgov.org

FRIDAY 22

Sugarloaf Crafts Festival

Get a bulk of your holiday shopping done at the Sugarloaf Crafts Festival. Check out 400-plus talented artisans, and take home amazing one-of-a-kind handcrafted products such as

THE BREAKFAST FESTIVAL OF MARYLAND

Saturday, November 16



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Kings Dominion

**SELECT DATES
NOV 23 – JAN 1**

jewelry, home décor, clothing and more. Kids can enjoy a dress-up theater while parents shop. Montgomery County Ag Fair, Md., 10 a.m. \$8. sugarloacrafts.com

SATURDAY 23

5th Annual Jennifer Bush-Lawson 5K & Family Fun Day

This annual run raises funds for economically vulnerable women and their babies to receive high-quality maternal and infant care. Along with a 5K run and kids fun run, there will be other activities to enjoy like moon bounces, laser tag, rock wall, balloon animals, face painting and performances. Knights of Columbus, Arlington, Va., 9 a.m., \$19.50-\$50. jb-lf.org/5K

Aquila Theatre:

George Orwell's '1984'

Aquila Theatre brings this classic, epic novel to life with dramatic effects and standout

performers. Published in 1949, "1984" examines the issues of truth, nationalism, censorship, surveillance, privacy and individualism. Center for the Arts, Fairfax, Va., 8 p.m. \$26-\$44. cfa.gmu.edu

SUNDAY 24

Dog Adoption Event

Ready to add a loving, furry friend to the family? Come out to Logan Hardware for City Dogs Rescue's dog adoption event! RSVP to cdradoptionevents@gmail.com. Logan Hardware, Washington, D.C., 12 p.m.

MONDAY 25

FREE Funday Monday

Make Monday less than boring with a day full of crafts, music, movement and fun. Organizations like Mr. Skip, My Gym and Paint Your Own Pottery will be in attendance. Old Town

Hall, Fairfax, Va., 10:30 a.m. fairfaxva.gov

TUESDAY 26

FREE Preschool Music & Motion

Get ready to dance and sing! This Music & Motion session offers a variety of music-related and movement activities for kids ages 3 to 6. Central Community Library, Manassas, Va., 10:30 a.m. pwcgov.org

WEDNESDAY 27

FREE Baby Storytime

Storytimes are great for developing children's reading and pre-reading skills as well as their imaginations. The library's storytimes include short stories, action rhymes, songs and fingerplays. Chinn Park Regional Library, Prince William, Va., 10:30 a.m.

FRIDAY 29

'The Nutcracker' by Virginia National Ballet

It's back again — the classic and super festive holiday performance we all know and love. Dance along with the Sugar Plum Fairy and watch the Nutcracker come to life in this amazing performance full of top-notch choreography and gorgeous sets. Hylton Performing Arts Center, Manassas, Va., 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. \$25-\$37. cvpa.gmu.edu

SATURDAY 30

Chanticleer

This male chorus dazzles with holiday cheer! Enjoy a festive program of Gregorian chant, Renaissance motets, Gospel melodies and Christmas carols. Center for the Arts, Fairfax, Va., 8 p.m. \$33-\$55. cfa.gmu.edu

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BY WF STAFF

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THE HOLIDAY SEASON IS THE PERFECT TIME TO GIVE back to the community. And what better way to give back this Thanksgiving than by participating in a fun family-friendly Turkey Trot? Before you indulge in pumpkin pie galore, burn some calories and support a good cause at one of these local community races below.

CLOVERLY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TURKEY TROT 1 MILER AND 5K: NOV. 9

Walk, run and join the fun at Cloverly Elementary School! Come on out and participate in this year's Turkey Trot 5K. Not up to the lengthy race? Run the mile race instead. Bring the whole family for a fun-filled evening. **800 Briggs Chaney Road, Silver Spring, Md., 4:30 p.m. \$10.**

GOLDS GYM TURKEY TROT: NOV. 9

Take part in Golds Gym Ritchie Station's first-ever Turkey Trot. Not only will you enjoy running the 5K, but you'll also be able to enjoy a turkey basket giveaway and a free concert following the race. **Golds Gym Ritchie Station, 1723 A Ritchie Station Court, Capitol Heights, Md., 7 a.m. \$20.**

PVTC CRANBERRY CRAWL 10K AND 5K: NOV. 16

Come out to the Cranberry Crawl! Run or walk in either a 10K or 5K race, and enjoy refreshments after you cross the finish line. Plus, the top three racers will receive delicious cranberry bread. **East Potomac Park, 972 Ohio Drive, S.W. Washington, D.C., 7:50 a.m. \$10; PVTC members, \$5.**

TURKEY TUMBLE FOR AUTISM: NOV. 17

Support the Organization for Autism Research by racing in this year's Turkey Tumble for Autism. Bring your family, friends and even (leashed) pets for some exercise and festive fun. **Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Path, 3700 Water St., Washington, D.C., 8 a.m. 5K, \$25; 10K, \$40; 10-Miler, \$50.**

MARINE CORP GOBBLE UP TURKEY TROT: NOV. 23

Runners of all ages are invited to gobble up the Turkey Trot 10K or Mile Run alongside the creek aboard Marine Corps Base Quantico. The festive finish includes a petting zoo and award presentations of frozen turkeys and pumpkin pies. **Marine Corps Base Quantico, 3250 Catlin Ave., Quantico, Va., 8:30 a.m. 10K, \$40; 1-Miler, \$16.**

ARLINGTON TURKEY TROT 5K FUN RUN/WALK: NOV. 28

This run goes through Lyon Park and Ashton Heights and raises money for local Arlington charities, including the Arlington Food Assistance Center, the People's Assistance Network, Arlington Thrive, Bridges to Independence and Doorways for Women and Families. **Christ Church of Arlington, 3020 North Pershing Drive, Arlington, Va., 8 a.m. Adults, \$45; Ages 6-17, \$25.**

TURKEY CHASE: NOV. 28

Join the Bethesda-Chevy Chase YMCA in a Thanksgiving Day celebration. With plenty of race options, there's fun for everyone. **9401 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda, Md., 8:30 a.m. 10K, \$46; 2-Miler, \$22; 1K, \$20; Kids 50-Meter, \$10.**

44TH ANNUAL ALEXANDRIA TURKEY TROT: NOV. 28

Started in 1975 with 244 runners, this popular event now has thousands of participants and offers generous cash and gift prizes to top finishers. **Mt. Vernon and E. Spring Street, Alexandria, Va., 9 a.m. 12 and Under, \$5; 13-21, \$15; 22 and Over, \$20.**

TROT FOR HUNGER: NOV. 28

Give back this season by joining the Trot for Hunger Thanksgiving Day Race to help provide food, health care and clothes to over 10,000 people in need. **Freedom Plaza, Washington, D.C., 8:30 a.m. Kids, \$15; Adults, \$40 (Timed), \$45 (Untimed).**

FAIRFAX TURKEY TROT: NOV. 28

Join Pacers Running for the most fun you can have on turkey day. Held in the heart of Old Town Fairfax, the fifth annual Fairfax Turkey Trot will benefit the City of Fairfax Fire Department Benevolent Fund. **Next to Fairfax Fire Station #3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax Va., 9 a.m. \$40.**

THANKSGIVING DAY 5K TURKEY TROT: NOV. 28

Come out to Project ECHO's annual Turkey Trot! Start your Thanksgiving day off right by running or walking this 5K in support of their organization's mission: Hope for the Homeless. **355 West Dares Beach Road, Frederick, Md., 7 a.m. Adults, \$30; 12 and Under, \$25.**

TURKEY BURNOFF 2019: NOV. 30

Racers come on out for the Turkey Burnoff race. Choose from either a 5- or 10-mile race. Enjoy the lovely views of Seneca Creek State Park, and keep your eye out for deer during your run! **Seneca Creek State Park, 11950 Clopper Road, Gaithersburg, Md., 8:15 a.m. Under 18, \$5; Adults, \$10. ■**

'thank you'

MAKING GRATITUDE A DAILY FAMILY PRACTICE

BY PJ FEINSTEIN

Every Thanksgiving, before my family gorges on turkey with gravy and marshmallow-topped sweet potatoes, we go around the table and share something we're thankful for. I would bet you have a similar family tradition. But are your responses as broad and generic as ours? Most of us say that we're grateful for our health or the opportunity to celebrate the holiday together. It's like we don't know how to answer such a big question — "What are you grateful for?" — when it's asked just once a year.

So why do we only count our blessings at the dinner table on the fourth Thursday of every November? After all, positive things happen to each of us every day. They might not be as monumental as receiving a clean bill of health or a long-awaited promotion, but they're worthwhile nonetheless: a stranger letting you cut ahead in line when you're obviously in a rush; helpful advice from a friend; a compliment from a teacher or boss. What would happen if people started practicing gratitude on a daily basis rather than just on Thanksgiving? Some local experts shared their thoughts.

THE BENEFITS OF GRATITUDE

In a nutshell, cultivating an attitude of gratitude might make families happier, healthier and more engaged with one another. "There is a growing body of gratitude research that suggests people

who engage in gratitude practices experience psychological, physical, and social benefits," says Joy Kolb, a licensed psychologist and licensed behavior analyst at Alliance Pediatrics in Gaithersburg. Experiencing gratitude, she explains, helps young children have a better understanding of emotions, teens feel less envious and less depressed, and adolescents report more self-discipline.

However, the study of gratitude is relatively new — only about 20 years, according to Anthony Ahrens, a professor of psychology at American University who focuses on gratitude, mindfulness and fear of emotion. Psychologists are "still early in trying to understand it," he says, but one benefit may be that gratitude can help us figure out who we can really trust. "It's hard to go through life on our own. We need to know which people we can trust, and experiencing and expressing gratitude can help us to realize the people who we can really count on — and also start to bind us more closely to them," Ahrens says, referring to a theory of gratitude called "find, bind, remind."

Then there's the idea that gratitude "can help us to understand that our lives are abundant rather than deprived," he adds. It's easy to focus on the things we lack, and sometimes that's important, he says, if it motivates us to go out and get them. But focusing on what we have creates a sense of abundance, and research even suggests that feeling grateful makes us more likely to be



generous, explains Adam Grant, a Wharton professor and *New York Times* bestselling author. “It leads us to think a little about what we have to offer and how we can contribute something that other people might appreciate,” he says.

PRACTICING GRATITUDE

If families are interested in starting a gratitude practice, Kolb recommends easing into it. “Some families start by taking turns around the dinner table stating a ‘win’ or ‘peak’ in their day, eventually shaping this exercise into daily gratitude statements,” she says. If children seem hesitant at first, parents can tailor the exercise around their interests and strengths. Artistic kids may prefer drawing a picture of their daily win, and writers can record a positive experience in a journal as part of their bedtime routine.

Talking or thinking about a person to whom you’re grateful is one thing, but expressing gratitude to that person directly is another. Some studies even suggest that outward expressions of gratefulness may be more beneficial to our well-being than simply thinking about gratitude. “Children can be taught to express their gratitude to others by sending thank-you notes or initiating a brief thank-you phone call,” Kolb says.

Another way to practice gratitude is to connect it with generosity. During family gratitude conversations at their dinner table, Adam Grant and Allison Sweet

Grant, co-authors of a new children’s book on generosity, “The Gift Inside the Box,” ask their kids about who they helped and who helped them at school. “At first, we started getting sort of your standard ‘I forgot’ responses from the kids. But after a while, they really became thoughtful about it and would answer with things like, ‘Oh, I helped somebody study for a quiz’ or ‘I shared my snack,’” says Sweet Grant. Asking their kids about receiving help from others reminds them to be grateful for the people who are supportive of them.

Similarly, “family volunteering and social service opportunities allow parents to point out how their children’s actions can fulfill others and how others express their gratitude,” Kolb says. But being helpful can also start at home with kids taking on household chores that are appropriate for their age and developmental level. “By engaging in activities that promote a sense of community, belongingness and autonomy, children cultivate gratitude within themselves and others,” she says.

Mastering the practice of gratitude takes time and effort, but by incorporating more opportunities to feel grateful every day, children may have an easier time answering the question “What are you grateful for?” at next year’s Thanksgiving dinner. ■

PJ Feinstein, the mother of two young boys, is a writer and editor in Potomac. She’s grateful for the opportunity to contribute to *Washington Family*.



SO WHY DO WE
ONLY COUNT
OUR BLESSINGS
AT THE DINNER
TABLE ON
THE FOURTH
THURSDAY
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TO EACH OF
US EVERY DAY.



“Family volunteering and social service opportunities allow parents to point out how their children’s actions can fulfill others and how others express their gratitude.”

— JOY KOLB
LICENSED PSYCHOLOGIST/ LICENSED BEHAVIOR
ANALYST, ALLIANCE PEDIATRICS, GAITHERSBURG





Easy as Pie

BY MICHELLE BLANCHARD ARDILLO

Between Halloween and late December, internet food sites buzz with searches for two of the biggest food days of the year: Thanksgiving and Christmas. It's not all about turkey and sides, however. According to the American Pie Council, approximately \$700 million in pies, or about 186 million units, are sold in grocery stores every year. This does not include pies sold in restaurants, bakeries and membership stores, such as Costco.

In fact, the pie council reports, if we lined up the number of pies sold at U.S. grocery stores in one year, they would wrap around the globe and keep going.

That's a lot of pie.

What makes pie one of America's favorite desserts, especially during the holiday season? We asked four local pie producers.

Slice of Life

As soon as Maryland native and former stay-at-home-dad Nic Romano dropped his youngest child off at school for the first time this year, he headed out to a commercial kitchen, where he rents the facility to bake pies, bread and cookies, which he sells

wholesale and via the New Market Farmers' Market twice a month. Baking seasonally, he started with peach and apple three-inch mini-pies, which were very successful. In October, he switched to pumpkin, which he makes using locally grown pumpkins.

"It is definitely worth the time and effort to break down the fruit and prepare it for baking," he says.

He tries different varieties that he finds at local produce stands, but one favorite is the Long Island Cheese, which is wider and flatter than the jack-o-lantern pumpkins found everywhere in the fall. Its lightly ribbed and pale-colored rind gives it the appearance of a wheel of cheese, thus the name.

Romano began his baking in the Navy. At ports of call in Ireland, the Middle East and the Mediterranean, he was able to sample baked goods and specialties of other cultures. After his service, he worked in a college cafeteria and later at Panera, baking bread through the night. His Panera experience and a gift from a friend of a sour dough starter helped him create his own loaves, which he now sells from his business, DaddyBoy Bake Shop.

PIE: PIE SISTERS; ROLLING PIN: GETTY IMAGES



The name comes from his 5-year-old son, Daniel. Romano and his wife of 10 years, Lisa, have two other children, Anna, 9, and Billy, 7. While Lisa focused on her career, Romano was home with the children, cooking and baking for his family and preparing for this new business venture. *Facebook/DaddyBoy Bake Shop*

Motherhood & Apple Pie

Founded in 1981, Mom's Apple Pie is an institution in Leesburg, Virginia, and it's all in the family. Avis Renshaw and her husband, Steven Cox, run three retail stores as well as Lost Corner Farm, where they grow the fruits and produce used in their pies. Their son, Tyson, works full time on the farm and comes into the bakery during the holiday season to help out. Daughter Petra worked in the family business for years and then opened her own pie company in New York City, Petee's Pie Company, which has stores in Manhattan and Brooklyn. And daughter Ansa lives on the farm and does the bookkeeping for the business as well as producing soups for the retail stores.

The pie business is year-round, according to Renshaw, but the company does a typical month's worth of business compressed into just three days around the Thanksgiving holiday. Thousands of pies are baked and sold from its three locations.

While the top four sellers during the holidays are apple, apple crumb, pumpkin and pecan, apple is still the most popular choice all year long. As the seasons change, so do the pies. During strawberry season on the farm, the stores sell fresh strawberry pies. Then comes blackberry pie, an open-faced pie that is very popular and always sells out.

Recipes are tinkered with year to year to accommodate changes in the produce that is grown on the farm. Multiple varieties of pumpkin and squash, such as butter-nut squash, neck pumpkins and kabocha, are mixed together to create the pumpkin pie with the best flavor and texture. For the company's sweet potato pie, white sweet potatoes, which are much sweeter, are mixed with orange and red varieties for the perfect filling. *momsapplepieco.com*

Pieces of the Pie

A childhood spent canning peaches and baking pies with their mother who "always baked everything" laid the groundwork for three sisters to become known as the Pie Sisters. Opening their Georgetown shop in 2012, Allison, Erin and Catherine Blakely went from having fun together in the kitchen baking with their mom

to starting at 4 in the morning to bake thousands of pies, all done by hand.

In the beginning, Allison focused on crust, cutting the shortening or butter into the flour with a fork, and Erin focused on filling. They also made some decisions that would set them apart from other pie shops. Seeing the success of a local cupcake shop and the growing trend of smaller-sized baked goods, the Pie Sisters

Approximately \$700 million in pies, or about 186 million units, are sold in grocery stores every year.

— AMERICAN PIE COUNCIL



Pie Sisters, from left: Erin, Catherine and Allison Blakely
Facing page: Pie Sisters' pumpkin pie



Year-round favorite at Dangerously Delicious Pies is the Baltimore Bomb, a vanilla custard single-crust pie that has Baltimore's Berger Cookies folded into the custard.

created pies in three sizes: a standard 9-inch pie, a cupcake-sized mini-pie called a "cuppie" and something called a "pie bite," which is the size of a mini-muffin, complete with its own mini-crust. These alternate sizes allow patrons to customize their order and please everyone at their holiday gathering. It also lets regular customers try new flavors without the cost of purchasing a whole pie.

All standard 9-inch pies are sold in the glass pie plate in which they are baked. As Allison Blakely shared, "the pie crust bakes more evenly in glass and you can see when the crust is fully baked, not soggy." Additionally, most of their pies were too heavy to sell or serve in an aluminum pie plate. The cost of the glass plates is factored into the cost of the pies, which average between \$35 and \$37 each, but if customers return the pie plate at a later date, they receive a \$2 credit toward their next purchase.

The Pie Sisters also offer savory pies, including chicken pot pie made from

their mother's recipe and quiches. All pies, both sweet and savory, can be ordered frozen and unbaked, so they can be picked up in advance (in their glass pie plates with baking instructions) and baked fresh on the day needed. Pie Sisters desserts can be found at weddings and birthday parties and company luncheons and on the dessert menus of area restaurants as well as on the tables of their regular customers.

The sisters' two most popular pies are their bourbon chocolate pecan and their apple caramel crunch pies, Allison says, but during the holiday season, pumpkin is also a favorite. They also offer gluten-free and lactose-free pies. piesisters.com

Deep Dish

Having reached her 25th anniversary of teaching first grade for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, Mary Wortman was searching for something new, but she had no idea it would be running a pie shop.

Dangerously Delicious Pies is a Baltimore staple founded by Rodney "The Pie Man" Henry, frontman to Baltimore band Glenmont Popes. While touring with his band, Henry would make pies for his crew and sell them at the merchandise table alongside the band's wares. In 2012, Wortman and her husband, John, decided to take the plunge and purchase the Canton location from Henry, who was on the road a lot with his band and his frequent appearances on the Food Network. Two years later, the husband-wife duo opened a second location under Henry's license agreement, a smaller, coffee-house-type of shop in Hampden. Using all of Henry's recipes, except for specials, which Wortman's head bakers have creative license to experiment with, the Wortmans have found success and learned a valuable lesson: "If you have to learn quickly, you do."

Originally, they both retained their full-time jobs, but eventually, they flung themselves full strength into the pie-baking world, serving 9-inch deep-dish pies, both savory and sweet, for breakfast, lunch and dinner. It's a family affair, as son Johnny oversees the Hampden location with co-manager Carla Crisp. Mary doesn't spend much time in the kitchen, but John does a lot of the baking, having traded the world of instrument technology for the science of oven temperatures.

The business's year-round favorite is the Baltimore Bomb, a vanilla custard single-crust pie that has Baltimore's Berger Cookies folded into the custard, Mary says. During the holidays, customers go for the more traditional fare, with pumpkin, sweet potato, pecan and apple — either traditional apple or apple crumb — being top choices.

The Wortmans must be doing something right as *People* magazine recently featured Dangerously Delicious Pies and their blueberry pancake pie as its Best Pie in the state of Maryland. dangerouslypiesbalt.com ■

Want to know how to make the perfect pie crust? Check out Nic Romano's recipe on our website.

A Full Menu for All-day Holiday Festivities

When holiday gatherings turn into all-day events, having meals ready from morning to night becomes an important part of seasonal hosting. Starting with breakfast through the main course followed by a savory dessert, a full day of celebration calls for a variety of dishes.

To help keep your crowd fueled for a wide range of activities, consider these recipes for Hot Cocoa Pancakes to get your morning started, Browned Butter Smashed Potatoes with Butternut Squash to pair with a holiday ham and Black Forest Cake to end the festivities on a high note.

BEGIN THE HOLIDAY WITH A FAMILY BREAKFAST

With so many activities scheduled and places to be during the holidays, starting the morning with a filling breakfast can help set your family on the path to enjoyable moments with loved ones.

These Hot Cocoa Pancakes require little time in the kitchen, leaving you more time to spend with the family before hitting the road or working on decorations for seasonal gatherings. Made with Aunt Jemima Pancake Mix, containing no artificial coloring or flavors, this recipe makes it simple to put breakfast on the table quickly while still achieving a meal full of flavor.

HOT COCOA PANCAKES

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 2 minutes per pancake

Yield: 12 pancakes (3 per serving)

2 tablespoons
unsweetened cocoa
powder
1 1/2 tablespoons sugar
1 cup 2% or non-fat milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups Aunt Jemima
Original Complete or
Buttermilk Complete
Pancake & Waffle Mix

1/4 cup water
marshmallow spread
(optional)
chocolate syrup (optional)
Aunt Jemima Syrup
(optional)

Heat skillet over medium-low heat or electric griddle to 375 degrees.

In microwave-safe bowl, mix cocoa powder, sugar, milk and vanilla until well combined. Heat in microwave 30 seconds, or until warm. Stir again to

ensure mixture is combined.

Combine cocoa mixture, pancake mix and water. Stir until large lumps disappear (do not beat or overmix). If batter is too thick, add additional 1-2 tablespoons water.

Pour slightly less than 1/4 cup batter onto lightly greased skillet or griddle. Cook 90 seconds, or until bubbles appear on surface. Turn and cook additional 30 seconds. Repeat with remaining batter.



Hot Cocoa Pancakes

TOP: GETTY IMAGES/E+/ GIRL: FG TRADE;
SYRUP: URFINGUSS; OTHER PHOTOS
COURTESY OF FAMILYFEATURES.COM

Top pancakes with marshmallow spread and drizzle chocolate syrup, or top with syrup.

PARTY-PERFECT POTATOES

Almost every holiday meal calls for side dishes to complement the main course, and as one of the most versatile base ingredients available, potatoes often provide home chefs with a multitude of options.

Served mashed, fried, scalloped, sliced, diced, boiled, roasted or just about any style in-between, potatoes are ideal for matching with the centerpiece of your family meal. These Browned Butter Smashed Potatoes with Butternut Squash call for Wisconsin yellow-flesh potatoes to achieve a dense, creamy texture with their just-buttered appearance.

Find more dishes for your holiday gatherings at eatwisconsin-potatoes.com.

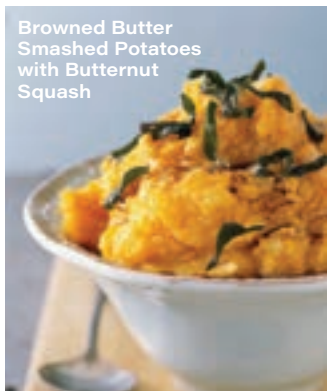
BROWNED BUTTER SMASHED POTATOES WITH BUTTERNUT SQUASH

Prep time: 25 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

- 1 pound (3 medium) Wisconsin yellow-flesh potatoes, cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch chunks
- 1 small butternut squash (about 1 pound), peeled, seeded and cut into 1-inch chunks
- water
- 1 teaspoon salt, plus additional, to taste, divided

Browned Butter Smashed Potatoes with Butternut Squash



- 3 tablespoons butter, divided
- 8-10 fresh (2-3-inch) sage leaves, stacked and cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch strips
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup 1% milk
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste

In 3-quart saucepan, cover potatoes and squash with water; add 1 teaspoon salt.

Bring to boil over high heat; reduce heat, cover and cook until tender, 12-15 minutes.

In small saucepan over medium heat, mix 2 tablespoons butter and sage. Tilting pan and watching closely, cook about 3 minutes, until butter foams and begins to brown; keep warm.

Thoroughly drain potatoes and squash, return to pan and shake 1-2 minutes over low heat. Using hand masher, roughly mash to create chunky mixture.

Over low heat, gently mix in remaining butter and milk.

Season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Spoon into serving bowl and drizzle with brown butter and sage.

Serve Up a Savory Sweet

No holiday gathering is complete without dessert, and you can take your sweets to the next level with this rich, creamy Black Forest Cake recipe.

Tart cherries and whipped cream are combined with Domino Golden Sugar – a less processed option which is made from pure cane sugar and works cup-for-cup just like white sugar, but with a golden color and distinct hint of molasses flavor – for a contrasting profile to put a spin on a seasonal classic.

Find more holiday dessert ideas at dominosugar.com.

BLACK FOREST CAKE

Servings: 8

CHERRY FILLING:

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Domino Golden Sugar



Black Forest Cake

- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water or unsweetened cherry juice
- 2 cups fresh or frozen pitted tart (Montmorency) cherries
- 2 tablespoons cherry brandy (optional)

CAKE:

- 1 $\frac{2}{3}$ cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup cocoa powder
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter, softened
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups Domino Golden Sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups buttermilk

STABILIZED WHIPPED CREAM:

- 1 teaspoon unflavored gelatin
- 2 tablespoons cold water
- 2 cups (1 pint) heavy whipping cream
- 2 tablespoons Domino Golden Sugar
- chocolate curls or shavings, for garnish (optional)

To make cherry filling: In medium saucepot, whisk sugar and cornstarch with water or juice then bring to boil over medium heat. Stir in cherries and cherry brandy, if desired, and boil 2-3 minutes, stirring, until sauce is thick and translucent. Drain cherries from sauce and set both aside.

To make cake layers: Heat oven to 350 F.

Line bottoms of three 8-inch

round cake pans with parchment paper. Grease and flour bottoms and sides.

In medium bowl, sift flour, cocoa powder, baking soda and salt.

In mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar 2 minutes on medium speed. Add eggs and vanilla; beat 1 minute. Stir in flour mixture and buttermilk.

Pour batter evenly among cake pans and bake 20-22 minutes, or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

Cool and remove layers from pans.

To make stabilized whipped cream: In small pan or microwaveable bowl, combine gelatin and cold water; allow gelatin to bloom. Heat until gelatin melts and dissolves; set aside.

In chilled bowl, whip cream with chilled beaters until soft peaks form. Add sugar and gelatin; beat until stiff.

Prick tops of two bottom layers with fork and brush cherry filling over layers. Sandwich bottom layers with a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick spread of stabilized whipped cream. Sandwich second and top layer with same whipped cream. Spread remaining whipped cream over top layer and sides.

Garnish with shaved chocolate, if desired, and decorate with any remaining whipped cream.

Find more holiday recipe inspiration at Culinary.net and auntjemima.com. ■

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How to Choose the Right Child Care

⊕ Strategies for Separation Anxiety

BY ABBY QUELLEN



Maybe you're dreading your child's first day in someone else's care. Or maybe you're excited to interview nannies or check out child-care facilities. Either way, finding someone to care for your child can be stressful. Kids' brains grow rapidly during the early childhood years, and childhood experiences set the foundation for future learning. Thus, high-quality child care is important. The majority of families must also consider affordability and ease of access.

However, child care can be expensive. And it's not always easy to get exceptional care. But, with the right tools, you can find just the right high-quality child care that provides opportunities and exploration for your child. Read on to learn about your various options and how to evaluate them. Then, discover strategies to help make the transition to child care easier for your child — and you.

Plan and Prioritize

If you want to find affordable, high-quality child-care, it's best to start early. Before you begin your search, decide what's most important to you in a child care provider. Do you most value one-on-one attention? Opportunities for socialization? Outdoor play? Healthy meals? You may not find everything you want in a provider or facility, but you're likely to find what's most important if you're clear on what it is.

Evaluate Your Options

Do you have a relative who's willing to provide care? This option is favored by many families. Relatives tend to offer affordable and flexible care and provide the attachment bond and individualized interaction shown to be advantageous for very small children. However, the option is obviously not available for all families.

In-home care, such as a nanny or au pair, offers many of the same advantages, including flexible hours, individualized attention and the ease and security of having your child stay in the home. But be sure to calculate all of the expenses, including taxes and sick and vacation leave for the caregiver. And be prepared to take on the responsibility of being an employer. Depending on how you hire your nanny, you may need to do interviews and background checks and draw up a detailed contract that spells out your expectations and policies.

If a relative or in-home care provider isn't right for you, it's time to investigate day-care facilities and home day cares, which usually accept children from 6 weeks to 6 years of age. They offer children the opportunity to play together and socialize, and many offer educational curricula, meals, field trips and other perks. Ask around for recommendations and do your own tours, interviews and evaluations.

With the right tools, you can find just the right high-quality child care that provides opportunities and exploration for your child.

Child-Care Facility Checklist

Bring the following checklist along when you tour child-care facilities. Look for these common child-care dangers:

- ☐ Cribs that don't meet safety standards
- ☐ Improper bedding
- ☐ Lack of child safety gates
- ☐ Blind cords that may present a strangulation hazard
- ☐ Recalled products
- ☐ Unsafe playground surfacing
- ☐ Inadequate playground maintenance

Check to make sure:

- ☐ The home or facility is routinely cleaned
- ☐ Handwashing procedures are in place
- ☐ The environment is free of smoke and pollutants

Are the Providers:

- ☐ Educated and skilled in early childhood development?
- ☐ Attentive and positive with the children?
- ☐ Friendly and good at communicating with parents?
- ☐ Planning to stay long?



Does the adult-to-child ratio meet American Academy of Pediatric recommendations for high-quality care? These recommendations include:

- ☐ Children aged 6 weeks to 1.5 years: three children per staff member, up to six in a group
- ☐ Children aged 1.5 years to 2 years: four children per staff member, up to eight in a group
- ☐ Children aged 2 to 3: seven children per staff member, up to 14 in a group
- ☐ Children aged 4 to 5: eight children per staff member, up to 16 in a group

Questions to Ask Potential Providers:

- ☐ Are you licensed by the state?
- ☐ Are you accredited by any organizations?
- ☐ What is the parent visitation policy?
- ☐ What's the illness policy?
- ☐ What is the parenting style and approach to discipline?
- ☐ Are meals provided?
- ☐ What's the daily schedule?
- ☐ Do the children have time and space for unstructured play?
- ☐ What is the educational curriculum?
- ☐ When and where do children nap?
- ☐ What are the potty-training procedures?
- ☐ How do caregivers communicate with parents?
- ☐ Transition to Child Care ■



Strategies for Separation Anxiety

Once you've found the right child care, the hard part is over, right? Not so fast. You still have to say goodbye to your child. The transition to child care can be emotional for parents and children, but these strategies can help.

Soothe your own anxiety by:

- Taking time to find the right child care
- Preparing the night before to avoid morning rushing
- Exercising, doing relaxation exercises, drinking calming tea or using another relaxation method

Sooth your child's anxiety by:

- Planning to stay with your child the first little while to help him or her get familiar with new people and surroundings, then gradually increasing the amount of time your child spends without you
 - Telling your child when you'll be leaving and when you'll be back
 - Establishing a simple goodbye ritual such as a song, phrase, hug, kiss or high-five
 - Expecting and preparing for some tears and talking with the caregivers about additional strategies to sooth your child



Enlisting someone to care for your young child is one of the most challenging parts of the early parenting years. Taking the time to find the right care makes the separation process easier for parent and child. ■



What's Your Child's Study Personality?

USE IT TO ACE THE NEXT EXAM

BY ANN DOLIN



Mid-year exams, unit assessments and chapter tests — what does it take to ace them? It's not just the time that's put in, it's also the method of studying that produces the best results. It's often that bright students don't get the grades they are hoping for on these types of tests. And they almost always fall into one of three camps when it comes to studying (or not): the crammers, the memorizers and the absorbers.

The Crammers

These are the kids who do fairly well throughout the quarter, especially on quizzes, but do poorly on cumulative exams. They are smart students who manage to get by during the year without putting too much time into their homework and studying. The studying they do is often at the last minute. If they have a test on Thursday, they

not understand how one situation or circumstance affects the whole. So they have trouble making sense of the bigger picture. In math, they can learn a skill in isolation but have difficulty applying it to problems outside of the specific skill learned. These kids need lots of practice making connections because it doesn't always come easily to them.

The Absorbers

For these students, school has been a breeze. They never really had to study when they were younger, and always got good grades. These are the kids who may not love academics, but they can sit in class, absorb the information and do well on the test without much effort.

They're good at critical thinking and analyzing information. But as the work gets harder and more complex, they lack the study habits to

Absorbers are good at critical thinking and analyzing information. But as the work gets harder and more complex, they lack the study habits to perform to their fullest potential.

start getting ready on Wednesday night. These kids don't have a strong sense of urgency until they are right up against a deadline. This type of cramming can pay off in the immediate term, but when they need to learn information on a deeper level, it backfires. Cramming only puts information into short-term memory, whereas learning it over many nights and sleeping on it (by the way, sleep is a fantastic study tool) stores it into long-term memory. It's not uncommon for Crammers to have two other traits – disorganization and procrastination.

The Memorizers

These kids are very hard workers, and they are often fairly well organized. They do well on quizzes and some tests that mostly require memorization. They put a lot of time into studying but don't see the results because they have a hard time connecting the dots. For example, in history, they may learn about two important battles but may see them as separate events, not completely understanding how they're connected. They may

perform to their fullest potential. These are the students who could get straight A's but instead get B's because they lack the proper study skills. They need direct guidance and a study plan to learn the material quicker and more efficiently.

So, how can studying be tailored to the Crammer, the Memorizer or the Absorber?

Here's a quick breakdown of ways that will benefit each of these types of students and some other tips that work for virtually any kind of learner.

The Crammer:

First, the Crammer has to want to change. In order for a different way of studying to work, he or she must recognize the problem and be willing to make modifications. If it's not seen as an issue, all the parental suggestions in the world won't work.

Often Crammers are willing to plan ahead if they don't feel like they have to do any more work than necessary and if they see the changes result in better grades (and they almost always do). The good news is that they often don't have to put in more time, they just need to use it more efficiently.

Studies show that when students use a concept called “distributed practice,” they are far more likely to do better on tests. For example, if your child has a test on Friday, they could study for an hour on Thursday night, but they would actually get a better grade if they took the same amount of time and distributed it over multiple days — 20 minutes Tuesday, 20 on Wednesday and 20 on Thursday. The reason they’ll get a better grade is not because they’ve reviewed the material multiple times, it’s that they’ve slept on it. When you learn information and then sleep on it, you’re consolidating that information into long-term memory. However, when you cram for a test, that information is learned at a superficial level, ready for regurgitation the next day. It’s going into short-term memory. Long-term memory is more beneficial because when you have a test later on, say a month later, you’re much more likely to be able to retrieve it.

Crammers also respond well to the suggestion of using “weird windows.” Sometimes, students think they need lengthy, dedicated time in which to study. And if they don’t have the perfect time and if they’re not in the ideal mood, they won’t do it. In actuality, they can use any chunk of time to get studying done. An example of a “weird window” is the 15 minutes they’re waiting at a doctor’s office or that 20 minutes right before lacrosse practice starts. Those are weird windows, and you can chunk time for studying by getting a lot done in short periods of time.

The Memorizer:

Memorizers do best when they study with others. In humanities subjects that require lots of critical thinking, listening to others’ points of view and how they connect one idea to another is helpful. Memorizers need to study in a multisensory way (auditory, visual and kinesthetic). When left on their own, these kids study by rereading (reviewing their notes or study guide solely by reading the information over multiple times). This isn’t the best way to retain material because you’re only using one sense, the visual mode. By also studying auditorily, you’re incorporating one more modality — and now you’re up to two!

You can make learning stick even more if you add in the kinesthetic (also known as tactile) modality. Anytime you engage in “self-talk” by asking yourself, “What’s important here?” or “How is this topic connected to the other one?” and jot those notes down, you’re learning kinesthetically, by writing. Writing or typing forces the learner to synthesize the information that is valuable for retention on test day. Working with a subject tutor who can help kids create this “self-talk” and learn to study in a multimodal way, is highly beneficial.

The Absorber:

The Absorber is usually a quick study, but like the Memorizer, his or her main method of studying is rereading. Rereading is by far the most inefficient way to study since it uses just one modality. Absorbers do well when they learn how to use study guides effectively.

When kids are young, teachers provide study guides in the form of a fill-in-the blank worksheet with questions about what is going to be tested. A great way to use a study guide is to make multiple blank copies of it and to first fill it out as best you can without referring to any information. You’re trying to retrieve what you have in your head and put it down on paper. Then, when you absolutely can’t remember anything else, you can go back to your information, which might include your notes or the book, and pull that information out and write it down. Basically, you only want to study what you know. Use this method three times on three blank study guides, and then you’ll really have it mastered for the exam.

As kids get older, teachers don’t give study guides out as regularly. Instead, students can make their own. In fact, research shows that when high school students make their own study guide, they achieve better grades on test day. How do you do this? Well, you can take the main headlines from class notes or book chapters and turn them into questions and then jot down answers to those questions. Maybe there is a section in the book on the causes of the Revolutionary War. You can change that into “What are the causes of the Revolutionary War?” and, in an outline format, jot down the answers. When you’re asking yourself these questions, you’re requiring your brain to consolidate information and remember the important parts.

At the end of the day, when parents and kids understand study personalities and tailor the preparation process accordingly, final exam grades will be a whole lot better. ■

By the way, sleep is a fantastic study tool.





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feynmanschool.org

admissions@feynmanschool.org

301-770-4370

1810 Falls Road, Potomac, Md.

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3514 Plyers Mill Road, Kensington, Md.

Ages: 2-6

Hours: 7:30 a.m.-6 p.m.

Since 1967, Spring Bilingual Montessori Academy (SBMA) has protected and encouraged children, and at the same time challenged and stretched them to the limits of their intellect and imaginations. Children arrive at SBMA as two year olds, barely out of diapers, and leave after kindergarten at the age of six: confident, assured and well-educated, possessing qualities of mind and character which serve them well as they continue to learn and achieve. Within the walls of our school children become literate and numerate. They develop pride in their own accomplishments and respect for the talents of their classmates. This is, above all, where children learn how it feels to do one's best work, and to have the effort as well as the product recognized and celebrated.

Open House: November 9th, 2019

January 11th, 2020



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The Auburn School



The mission of The Auburn School is to grow the social and academic potential of bright students with social and communication challenges. We offer a dynamic educational program for intellectually curious students with challenges in the areas of communication, socialization, pragmatic language, and organization.

Open now, our Little Leaves center-based ABA

program for young children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder is run in a preschool-like setting. We also work with children in their homes, daycares and schools throughout the Baltimore metro area, Washington DC and Northern Virginia.

Silver Spring Campus

Beth Kubovci

(703) 793-9353

bkubovcik@theauburnschool.org

Fairfax Campus

Ashley Pawlowitz

(301) 588-8048

apawlowitz@theauburnschool.org

www.theauburnschool.org

The Auburn School
NURTURING BRIGGS MINDS

WASHINGTON WALDORF SCHOOL

washingtonwaldorf.org

llawson@washingtonwaldorf.org

301-229-6108

4800 Sangamore Rd., Bethesda, Md.

Grades: PreK-12 • Year Founded: 1969 • Coed • Enrollment: 286 • % of Minorities: 30%, 33 nationalities, 19 languages spoken • Average Class Size: 17 • Student-Teacher Ratio: 7:1 • Grading System: A-F • Foreign Language: Spanish beginning in 1st Grade, Spanish & German in Middle and High School • Tuition Range: \$9,100-\$30,200 • Number of Computers: 20 • Enrichment Activities • Sports • Extended Day • Summer Program • Drama Club • Diversity Circle • Student Council • Afterschool Kayaking • Student Exchange Program • Community Service • Service Learning • Newspaper At Washington Waldorf, we encourage the connections that broaden students' experiences and help them grow in new directions. Our teachers incorporate academic, artistic, and practical elements into every subject, creating memorable lessons, successful scholars, and strong individuals. Think clearly. Feel compassionately. Act purposefully.

Open Houses: All school evening open house for the whole family

(4-6 p.m.):

2019: Nov. 5, Dec. 3

All school morning tours for parents

(8-10:30 a.m.):

2019: Nov. 7, Nov. 13, Dec. 5, Dec. 10

2020: Jan. 9, Jan. 14, Feb. 6, Feb. 25, Mar.

19, Apr. 21, May 7

Preschool/Kindergarten Saturday open houses for the whole family

(10 a.m.-12 p.m.): 2019: Nov. 16

2020: Jan. 11 (Snow Date Jan. 18)

High school open mornings for students and parents

(8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.):

2019: Oct. 17, Nov. 19, Dec. 17

2020: Jan. 16

VIRGINIA

ACADEMY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

myschoolace.com

703-471-2132

10800 Parkridge Blvd., Ste. 150
Reston, Va.

Grades: Toddler-Grade 6 • Year Founded: 1996 • Religious • Coed • Enrollment: 170 • % of Minorities: 90% • Average Class Size: 12-13 • Elementary Assessment • Grading System A-F • Uniforms • Foreign Languages: Spanish beginning in Sr. Kindergarten • Tuition: \$20,000 • Number of Computers: 80 • Internet Access • Enrichment Activities • Extended Day • Summer Program • Mommy & Me Classes The Academy of Christian Education provides a unique learning experience for Toddlers through Elementary aged

students by combining a high-quality, academically accelerated program with a Biblical foundation.

Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

THE AUBURN SCHOOL

theauburnschool.org

info@theauburnschool.org

703-793-9353

3800 Concorde Parkway

Chantilly, Va.

Grades K-8th • Year Founded: 2009 • Coed

• Average Class Size: 8 • Student-Teacher Ratio: 8:2 • Grading System: A-F • Foreign Languages (Silver Spring): Spanish, Mandarin • Internet Access • Learning Dis-abled Program • Enrichment Activities • Summer Program

The Auburn School grows the social and academic potential of bright students with social and communication challenges, supporting the development of academic skills, social competency and pragmatic language in an engaging educational environment.

Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

BASIS INDEPENDENT MCLEAN

mclean.basisindependent.com

[mcLean_admissions@](mailto:mcLean_admissions@basisIndependent.com)

basisIndependent.com

703-854-1253

8000 Jones Branch Dr., McLean, VA

Grades: Twos Program-Grade 12 • Year

Founded: 2016 • Coed • Enrollment: 470 •

Student-Teacher Ratio 8:1 • Entrance Exam

• Foreign Languages: Mandarin, Latin,

Spanish, and French beginning in PK1 •

Tuition Range: \$25,500 - \$30,000

• AP Classes • Enrichment Activities • Sports

• Transportation • Extended Day • Summer

Program

Students, age 2-grade 12, receive a well-rounded, liberal arts curriculum with a STEM focus.

Open House: 2020: January 11

BROOKSFIELD SCHOOL

brooksfieldschool.org

brksfield@aol.com

703-356-5437

1830 Kirby Road, McLean, Va.

Grades: Toddler-Kindergarten • Year

Founded: 1987 • Coed • Enrollment: 100 •

Average Class Size: 20 • Student-Teacher

Ratio: 5:1 (Toddlers) 10:1 (Primary) •

Foreign Language: Spanish beginning as

Toddler • Tuition Range: \$14,220-\$23,907 •

Number of Computers: 6 • Internet Access

• Enrichment Activities • Transportation

(for before/after FCPS care program)

• Extended Day • Summer Program •

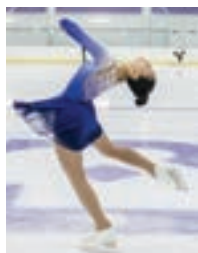
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BURGUNDY FARM COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

burgundyfarm.org
info@burgundyfarm.org
703-960-3431

3700 Burgundy Road, Alexandria, Va.

Grades: JK-8th • Year Founded: 1946 • Coed • Enrollment: 286 • % of Minorities: 35% • Average Class Size: 15 • Student-Teacher Ratio: 7:1 • Entrance Exam • Foreign Languages: French, Spanish beginning in JK • Tuition Range: \$23,592- \$26,998 • Number of Computers: 150 • Internet Access • Enrichment Activities • Sports • Transportation • Extended Day • Summer Program

Burgundy provides an inclusive, creative, nurturing environment that engages the whole child. Our innovative, hands-on approach cultivates independent thinking, promotes academic excellence, instills respect for diversity, and teaches responsibility.

Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

CONGRESSIONAL SCHOOL

congressionalschool.org
admission@congressionalschool.org
703-533-1064

3229 Sleepy Hollow Rd.

Falls Church, VA

Grades: Infants-Grade 8 • Year Founded: 1939 • Coed • Enrollment: 350 • Average Class Size: 13 • Student-Teacher Ratio: 6:1 • Grading System A-F • Uniforms • Foreign Languages: French, Spanish, Latin beginning in Preschool • Tuition Range: \$25,150-\$29,800 • Number of Computers: 1:1 • Internet Access • Enrichment Activities • Sports • Transportation • Extended Day • Summer Program • Equestrian Program • Robotics Program

A co-ed, independent, day school in Falls Church, VA, Congressional School develops great thinkers and leaders by encouraging students to explore, embrace challenge, and grow through an innovative academic program. With over 30 after school activities, extended hours, and 15 middle school athletic teams, a Congressional education extends well beyond the school day. Fully prepared for excellent secondary schools, Congressional School graduates have confidence, a sense of ethics, and the desire to continually and

respectfully question, collaborate, create, and lead.

Open House: 2019: Nov. 21
2020: Jan. 15

GUIDEPOST MONTESSORI

guidepostmontessori.com/
northern-virginia
866-202-8593

24328 Marrwood Drive, Aldie, Va..

42945 Waxpool Road, Ashburn, Va..

4550 Walney Road, Chantilly, Va.

13251 Woodland Park Road
Herndon, Va.

3551 Waterway Drive, Montclair, Va

Ages: Infant to elementary
Guidepost Montessori in Loudoun, Fairfax and Prince William counties is among a growing, worldwide network of schools that offer language immersion for ages infant through elementary.

**Kindergarten and Elementary
Night at Aldie Campus November 15,
6 p.m. to 7 p.m.**

KENWOOD SCHOOL

kenwoodschoool.com
alison@kenwoodschoool.com
703-256-4711

4955 Sunset Ln., Annandale, Va.

Grades: K-6th • Year Founded: 1957 • Coed • Enrollment: 75 • % of Minorities: 50% • Average Class Size: 8 • Student-Teacher Ratio: 8:1 • Grading System: A-F • Foreign Language: Spanish beginning in K • Tuition Range: \$775 per month • Number of Computers: 20 • Internet Access • Enrichment Activities • Extended Day • Summer Program • Gymnastics • Taekwondo • Soccer

Kenwood is a charming environment to learn in. The classes are small (average of 10, maximum of 15), which offers more one-on-one time with the teacher than your average school. The students receive an individualized experience, which helps them grow and learn more than is possible in a large classroom setting. We pride ourselves on our home-like atmosphere and loving faculty.

Open House: Call to schedule a tour.



Grow
beyond
the boundaries

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Join us for a tour or open house to explore our **one-of-a-kind 26-acre campus** & learning environment for students age 4 through grade 8.

Burgundy is a school where:

- academic **excellence** is fostered through a rigorous, integrated curriculum;
- every child's curiosity and wonder develop into a **passion** for learning that lasts a lifetime;
- students become active, collaborative, and **confident** self-advocates;
- diversity of all kinds is valued and **celebrated**;
- and students **grow** beyond the boundaries.

Limited space available in some of this fall's classes!



3700 Burgundy Road,
Alexandria, VA 22303
burgundyfarm.org

Admission: 703.349.6968

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- Differentiated Instruction
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703.354.3446 • pinecrestschool.org

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washingtonfamily.com/fun_things_to_do/

MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF CEDAR LANE

preschoolmontessori.com
info@cedarlanemontessori.com
703-560-4379

3035 Cedar Ln., Fairfax, Va.
Grades: PreK-K • Year Founded: 1971 • Coed
• Enrollment: 100 • Average Class Size:
25 • Student-Teacher Ratio: 12:1 • Foreign
Language: Spanish • Tuition Range: \$9,312-
\$17,405 • Internet Access • Sports • Half
and Full-Day Program • Summer Program
• Music

Montessori School of Cedar Lane has been
providing over 40 years of Montessori
tradition to Northern Virginia. We offer
a complete educational and social
environment and utilize the discoveries and
methods of Dr. Montessori to help the child
develop more fully the potential within him.

Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF MCLEAN

mcleanmontessori.org
703-790-1049

1711 Kirby Road, McLean, Va.
Ages 2 ½-12

Preschool and Elementary classes •
Foreign Languages: Spanish and French •
Science & Technology • Drama • Music • P.E.

• Computer • Art • Transportation •
Summer Program
Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

msnv.org
info@msnv.org
703-256-9577

**Hillbrook Campus: 6820 Pacific Ln.
Annandale, VA**
**Valleybrook Campus: 3433 Rose Ln.
Falls Church, VA**

Hours: 7:30 a.m.- 5:45 p.m.
Yoga • Drumming • Arts • Maker Club MSNV
is a leading independent school in the
Washington Metropolitan area providing
authentic Montessori education for
children ages 2 through 12. Our mission
is to inspire and guide children to love
learning, to love one another, and to love
the world around them.

Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

NYSMITH SCHOOL FOR THE GIFTED

13625 EDS Drive
Herndon, Virginia 20171

Phone: (703) 713-3332

Website: nysmith.com

Email: ebalberde@nysmith.com

Grades: 3 years - 8th Grade • Founded:
1984 • Religious: No • Enrollment: 550 • %
Minorities: 49 • Average Class Size: 18
Entrance Exam: Yes • Foreign Languages:
French/Spanish/Latin • Grade Foreign
Language • Begins: 3 Years • Tuition
Ranges: \$27,750 - \$37,900 • Number of
Computers: 400+ • Sports Programs: Yes •
Enrichment Activities: Yes • Transportation:
Yes • Extended Day: Yes • Summer
Program: Yes
The award winning Nysmith School for the
Gifted is committed to making school fun.
We nurture your student's love of learning
and help your child learn to their potential.
Top 10 School in the World.
Open House: Nov. 21, 9 a.m. & 1 p.m.

OAKCREST SCHOOL

oakcrest.org
admissions@oakcrest.org
703-790-5450

1619 Cromwell Rd.

Vienna, VA

Grades: 6-12 • Year Founded: 1976 •
Girls Only • Enrollment: 260 • % of
Minorities: 32% • Student-Teacher
Ratio: 6:1 • Entrance Exam • Grading
System: A-F • Foreign Languages: Spanish,
Latin beginning in Grade 6 • Tuition

Range: \$26,960-\$28,270 • AP Classes
• Extracurricular Activities • Sports •
Transportation
Oakcrest, an independent school, educates
the whole person. Guided
by the teachings of the Catholic
Church and the spirituality of
Opus Dei, we weave together a rich liberal
arts curriculum, character development,
one-on-one mentoring and service
to create a vibrant environment that
graduates confident young women--young
women who will make a difference in all
they choose to do.

**Open House: Saturday, October 19
2:00-5:00 pm. Register at oakcrest.org.**

PINECREST SCHOOL

pinecrestschool.org
admissions@pinecrestschool.org
703-354-3446

7209 Quiet Cove, Annandale, VA
Grades: Preschool-6th • Year Founded: 1957
• Coed • Enrollment: 80 • % of Minorities:
32% • Average Class Size: 9 • Student-
Teacher Ratio: 9:1 • Grading System:
Number • Tuition Range: \$6,700-\$15,850 •
Number of Computers: 20 • Internet Access
• Enrichment Activities • Extended Day •
Summer Program • Community Service

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www.beauvoirschool.org



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Open House: Monday November 11, 2019, 9:30-11:30am
Sunday, January 12, 2020, 1-3pm
Sunday, February 9, 2020, 1-3pm
Sunday, April 19, 2020, 1-3pm

Randolf-Macon Academy

rma.edu

admission@rma.edu

540-636-5484

200 Academy Dr., Front Royal, VA

Grades: 6-12 • Year Founded: 1892 • Religious • Coed • Enrollment: 233 • % of Minorities: 40% • Average Class Size: 11-14 • Student-Teacher Ratio: 7:1 • Entrance Exam • Grading System: A-F • Foreign Languages: German, Spanish, French, Arabic beginning grade 8 • Tuition Range: \$20,069-\$42,771 • Number of Computers: 655 • Internet Access • AP Classes • Enrichment Activities • Sports • Summer Program • Flight Program • Air Force Junior ROTC

As students at Randolph-Macon Academy

discover "The Power of Rise." within themselves, they develop the ability to think critically, to lead with confidence, and to solve problems creatively, ensuring they have the skills to succeed in life.

Open House: Nov 11, Dec 8

RESTON MONTESSORI SCHOOL

restonmontessori.com

office@restonmontessori.com

703-481-2922

1928 Isaac Newton Sq. West, Reston, Va. Grades: Infant-6th • Year Founded: 1986 • Coed • Enrollment: 200+ • Average Class Size: 24 • Uniforms: K and up • Foreign Language: French beginning at Toddler • Number of Computers: 12 • Internet Access • Enrichment Activities • Sports • Extended Day • Summer Program • Academic Therapy Services • Additional Programs: Music, PE, Art

Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

SAINT ANN CATHOLIC SCHOOL

stann.org

stann@stann.org

703-525-7599

980 North Frederick St.,
Arlington, Va.

Grades: Preschool-Grade 8 • Year Founded: 1951 • Catholic • Coed • % of Minorities: 30% • Average Class Size: 20-25 • Student-Teacher Ratio: 2:1 • Grading System A-F for 6th-8th • Uniforms • Foreign Language: Spanish beginning in Kindergarten • Tuition Range: \$4,300-\$11,100 • Number of Computers: 50+ • Internet Access • Enrichment Activities • Sports • Extended Day • Basketball • Lacrosse • Tennis • Track • Volleyball • Robotics • Art • Boys Scouts • Girl Scouts • Chess Club • Student Council • Caritas • Social Justice Club • Math Club Saint Ann Catholic School has an average of 20 to 25 students per class. Our small size allows us to focus on academic excellence and moral formation of our students. Our community is bound together by a dedication to BELIEVE, ACHIEVE and INSPIRE.

Open House: Call to schedule a tour.

WESTMINSTER SCHOOL

westminsterschool.com

admissions@westminsterschool.com

703-256-3620

3819 Gallows Road, Annandale, VA Grades: Pre-K-8 • Year Founded: 1962 • Coed • Enrollment: 270 • Average Class Size: 14 • Student-Teacher Ratio: 7:1 to 18:1 • Entrance Exam • Uniforms • Foreign Languages: French, Latin beginning in K • Tuition Range: \$10,926-\$23,466 • Internet Access • Enrichment Activities • Sports • Transportation • Extended Day • Summer Program • Drama • Arts • Orchestra • Daily PE • Odyssey of the Mind • Math Counts • Science Olympiad Westminster School provides a unique elementary education based on a classical curriculum, accelerated academics enhanced by the arts and an emphasis on personal responsibility and good character. Students enjoy small classes taught by teachers who specialize in their field.

Open House: Nov. 11, Jan. 27, 9:00-10:30 a.m.

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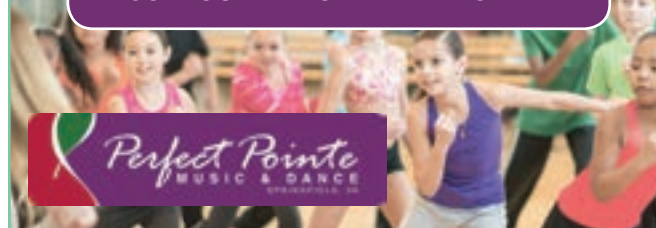
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- Voice

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- Jazz
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- Acrobatics
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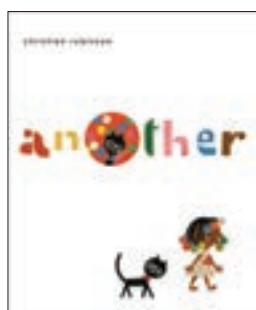
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A	Columbia: 443-755-0111	R	Falls Church: 703-534-SWIM
R	Germantown: 301-540-SWIM	G	Manassas: 703-392-SWIM
Y	Laurel: 301-725-SWIM	I	Midlothian: 804-744-6513
L	North Bethesda: 301-984-SWIM	N	Springfield: 703-321-SWIM
A	Rockville: 301-217-5910	I	Sterling: 703-444-9673
N	Waldorf: 301-698-SWIM	A	



All Wrapped Up

Hint, hint! These books make great presents

COMPILED BY THE BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY'S COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT STAFF

This year brought us some great reads that would also make for wonderful gifts. Check out this list.

BOARD/TODDLER

'I Am a Baby'

by Katherine Madeline Allen

Babies will be engaged in this rollicking read-aloud, as they view pictures of diverse infants and everyday objects.

'Flip Flap Find! Counting 1, 2, 3'

by Violet Peto

Bright illustrations and simple text teach toddlers to count from one to 10 while they guess what will hatch from the egg.

PICTURE BOOKS

'Saturday'

by Oge Mora

Ava loves spending Saturday with her mother; it is their special day. However, this Saturday does not go as planned. In the end, it is Ava who reminds her mother that spending the day together is the most important thing.

'Another'

by Christian Robinson

In her bedroom at night, a young girl follows her cat into another dimension. This topsy-turvy world has other children playing with their "twin." Is this just a dream or another world?

YOUNG READERS

'Who Is the Mystery Reader?'

by Mo Willems

Gift givers can't go wrong with Mo Willems, and his newest is another slam-dunk winner.

The second in the Unlimited Squirrels series finds a masked Mystery Reader helping his fellow squirrels sound out words and gain confidence in their decoding skills. In addition to the rollicking adventure, readers will devour the extras, including jokes, quizzes and squirrely facts.

'Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker'

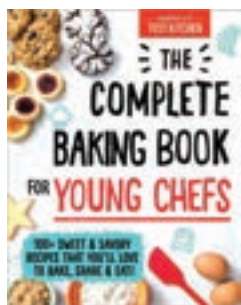
"Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker" opens in theaters in December, and young fans will cherish this guidebook. Filled with facts about characters, new planets and scary monsters and villains, kids will get lost in this eye-catching book packed with pictures from the movie. Get ready to learn everything you ever needed to know about Rey, Poe and Finn and their thrilling adventures in a galaxy far, far away!

MIDDLE READERS

'The Complete Baking Book for Young Chefs'

from America's Test Kitchen

America's Test Kitchen brings its rigorous testing and methodical approach to kids baking. Recipes were thoroughly tested by more than 5,000 kids to get them just right for cooks of all skill levels. Recipes are included for breakfast, breads, pizzas, cookies, cupcakes and more and include easy-to-follow, step-by-step photos and instructions as well as information on technique and the science behind baking. Perfect for young foodies and aspiring chefs.



'Tech Lab: Brilliant Builds for Smart Makers'

by Jack Challoner

Engage budding scientists and engineers, as they experiment, invent and test technology, electronics and mechanics at home. Simple steps with clear photographs take readers through building each project with low-cost and readily available materials. Fact-filled panels explain the science behind each project and also provide a real-world example of its usage.

YOUNG ADULT

'Obviously: Stories from My Timeline'

by Akilah Hughes

The comedian and YouTube sensation arrives with her debut book, a memoir of sorts, filled with hilarious, punchy anecdotes. Hughes describes her childhood and teenage years in small-town Kentucky, complete with stories of family, friends and how she coped with food issues and anxiety. Her arrival in New York City and the transition to big-city life brought additional pressures, particularly as a woman of color in the entertainment industry. Perfect for teens looking for inspiration from someone who beat the odds.

'Mooncakes'

by Suzanne Walker and Wendy Xu

This beautifully illustrated graphic novel features two Chinese-American protagonists: Nova, a small-town witch, and Tam, a werewolf. Nova's hearing impairment doesn't stop her adventurous spirit, and when she goes on a quest to find Tam in the forest, they encounter a dangerous horse that has been demon-possessed. Nova and her hilarious grandmothers rescue Tam and welcome him into the New England bookstore they own and operate, where romantic sparks quickly fly. Sweet and quickly bounding between fantasy and reality, this is a sure bet for fans of both shojo manga and "The Prince and the Dressmaker." ■

Happy Birthday, Madeleine L'Engle!

Each month, we celebrate a birthday of literary significance.



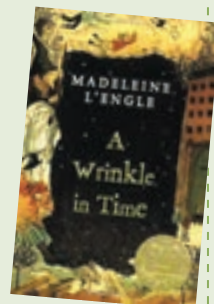
"Just because we don't understand doesn't mean that the explanation doesn't exist." This is the wisdom that Charles Murry tells Meg in the classic novel,

"A Wrinkle in Time," the adventurous, kid-enchancing story written by Madeleine L'Engle. The story centers on Meg Murry as she travels through time and space to find her missing scientist father.

The book was first published in 1962 and has received the Newbery Medal, the Sequoyah Book Award and the Lewis Carroll Shelf Award. It is the first book in the Time Quintet series. For generations, preteens and young adults have delighted in the story, and the book is so popular it became a successful movie — twice. The first film came out in 2003 and the second, most current one in 2018.

L'Engle based the Murray family on her own science and magic-intrigued relatives. She grew up in the Upper East Side of Manhattan and earned her degree in English from Smith College, nurturing her own love for writing stories. "I've been a writer ever since I could hold a pencil," she told *Humanities* magazine in an interview.

L'Engle continued her passion for writing until her death in September 2007. She wrote more than 60 books and her final work was "The Joys of Love," published in 2008.



LITTLE LEARNERS



Preschool Years = Pre-reading Years

BY ZIBBY ANDREWS



By the time their children are in preschool, parents can clearly see how learning stems from relationships and engagement. When young children are lovingly encouraged and supported, they engage joyfully with new learning and absorb new information quickly and easily. Thankfully, research supports the role of relationships in learning. Parental involvement has a scientific, research-based stamp of approval.

Parents have a distinct advantage over teachers. Teachers have to establish a multitude of new relationships each year before they can allow optimal learning to happen. Parents can lead their child into the world of reading directly from intimate and peaceful rocking-chair moments. They can follow their child's lead as they move them into the world of books and reading.

But paving the way for pre-reading and early reading means understanding that reading is not about learning the names

of the letters of the alphabet. Reading is about meaning and understanding. It assumes active engagement with text and requires an ability to understand context as kids attack each sound and word.

Reading for meaning comes from language and comprehension — skills that can and should be purposefully supported.

PARENTS HAVE A DISTINCT ADVANTAGE OVER TEACHERS.

Teachers have to establish a multitude of new relationships each year before they can allow optimal learning to happen. Parents can lead their child into the world of reading directly from intimate and peaceful rocking-chair moments.

To develop into strong readers, children need:

- ▶ a robust store of background information;
- ▶ a rich spoken language base;
- ▶ a broad and deep vocabulary;
- ▶ verbal reasoning abilities and conceptual or abstract knowledge.

These are the things preschool teachers emphasize, the things that do much more than a worksheet to support pre- and emerging reading skills. But they're not always on the parental radar as critical to a developing or future reader.

A rich variety

Background knowledge is vital to learning to read. It comes from trips taken to the zoo and the beach and the nature center. It comes from socializing with neighbors and friends who have different experiences. It also comes from choosing books set in novel places, full of different animals, homes, trees, flowers and characters. And



experiencing something firsthand makes it personal and even more valuable. So, when a family's weekly trip to the farmers' market intersects with the farm theme in the preschool classroom, a child will be ready to learn at a deeper level. Because they can visualize the market from personal experience, they will have already internalized many of the vocabulary words and concepts — words and ideas they will have when they eventually pick up a book to read about farming or markets or nutrition.

A strong store of background information also comes from a variety of classes: the music and gym classes parents attend with their child and the science and art classes they attend at school. These experiences expose children to the things they will eventually be reading about independently. Later, when they're tackling a book about a ballerina, the actual reading and understanding of the book will be easier, enriched by the dance class they attended as a preschooler — and by the wild dancing they did in their own living room.

Words and more words

By speaking purposefully to their child, by connecting their child's previous experiences to new and novel experiences and by reading a variety of books, parents will help children see new words in familiar contexts and familiar words in new contexts.

If parents purposefully incorporate new vocabulary words into different aspects of the day, children will start to use them. Children make connections between and among their personal experiences. And they can then make the leap from their world to the world of a book. They can create the personal meaning for these new words and concepts that is basic to true understanding.

Read to children every day, two or three or even four times, because books include higher concentrations of rare words than ordinary language. Yes, even children's books. Children's books also have picture clues that encourage the critical thinking used to determine the meaning of words and actions.

As parents help their children develop their own expressive vocabulary, the words they speak, they can also point out

the literary devices that encourage them to play with sounds. Find books with rhythm, repetition and sound effects. Attention to varied and tricky sounds will lead to smooth readers who can quickly make transitions from cat to fat to pat and eventually to patch and pattern.

Curious and creative

Young children are naturally curious. Their thoughts, internal and external, are buzzing with questions. They are constantly making connections and trying desperately to make sense of the world. They begin with concrete understanding and learn best from physical connections (which is why things always go in their mouths). A parent's job is to support them as they move from this dependence on seeing, touching

and feeling to an ability to reason, visualize, justify and think more critically.

Good questions can be the key to these emerging skills. Help children play with ideas and challenge them to think outside the box. They often do it naturally, using a kind of magical thinking that takes them from a simple concept to a wild and wonderful place. They can see it as they build a castle as a home for a toy penguin or retell an event that bears little resemblance to reality. When parents can, they should go along with these fantasies and use their own imagination to support creative thinking. ■

Zibby Andrews is a mother and grandmother with 40-plus years in early childhood education.

Pre-Reading Practice

WHEN TALKING TO CHILDREN, USE OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS:

- ▶ What are the people in this picture saying?
- ▶ How many ways can we use water?
- ▶ What would happen if ...? (Be wacky! What would happen if our dog could fly?)
- ▶ Why do you think the leaves are turning brown? (Maybe it is fairies! Accept that magical thinking – real science will come later.)

HELP CHILDREN USE THEIR SENSES. TELL THEM TO CLOSE THEIR EYES AND GUESS:

- ▶ What do you hear?
- ▶ What did I put in your hand?
- ▶ What's different about this new jam?



ASK ABOUT CHANGES AND DIFFERENT WAYS TO LOOK AT THINGS:

- ▶ What would be more fun if it was faster?
- ▶ What would you like better if it was smaller?
- ▶ Our neighbor has a new cat. How do you picture him in your head? Where is he sitting? Is he striped? What color? ■



2019 Preschool and Child Care Guide

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

AIDAN MONTESSORI SCHOOL

aidanschool.org

admissions@aidanschool.org

Ages: 18 Months to Grade 6

202-387-2700

2700 27th Street NW, Washington, DC

Aidan Montessori School prepares children to learn confidently, think independently, and succeed wherever they go. Full-Day programming for Toddler & Primary children will be available beginning in the 2020-2021 school year.

BEAUVOIR, THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

beauvoirschool.org

margaret.hartigan@cathedral.org

202-537-6493

3500 Woodley Road, N.W.

Washington, D.C.

Grades: PreK-3rd • Year Founded: 1933

• Religious: Cathedral School • Coed •

Enrollment: 390 • % of Minorities: 41% •

Average Class Size: 21 • Student-Teacher

Ratio: 6:1 • Foreign Language: Spanish

beginning in PK • Tuition Range: \$36,655

• Enrichment Activities • Extended Day •

Summer Program

At Beauvoir, the National Cathedral Elementary School, we provide an extraordinary early childhood education in a diverse community that values every individual. Beauvoir's program encourages creative, courageous learners and builds an enduring foundation for a lifelong spirit of inquiry and joy in learning.

BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF WASHINGTON

biswashington.org

admissions@biswashington.org

202-829-3700

2001 Wisconsin Ave., N.W.

Washington, D.C.

Grades PK2-12

Pre-school at BISW features a play-based school curriculum beginning at age 2.

We build a strong foundation of social, emotional, and academic learning to ensure success throughout school. K-12 programs available too, culminating in the IB Diploma.

MARYLAND

THE BETHESDA MONTESSORI SCHOOL

bethesdamontessori.com

admissions@bethesdamontessori.com

301-986-1260

7611 Clarendon Road, Bethesda, Md.

Ages: 3-6

BMS, established in 1983, is located in the heart of Bethesda, offering two years of

preschool and a Kindergarten year. Open 8 a.m.-6 p.m., AML trained teachers, art, French & computer offered, and after school activities.

CHESTERBROOK ACADEMY

chesterbrookacademy.com

877-959-3746

20 locations throughout the DMV

Ages: Infants - Grade 5

Our preschool and school-age programs combine learning experiences and structured play in a fun, safe and nurturing environment - offering far more than just child care. We have 20 locations in the Washington D.C. area. Call today to schedule a tour!

CRESTVIEW MONTESSORI SCHOOL

crestviewmontessori.com

info@crestviewmontessori.com

Ages: 2-6; 301-910-4728

4728 Western Ave., Bethesda, Md.

Children enter Crestview at age 2 1/2, often as their first school experience, and depart after kindergarten as confident and self-assured young children.

FEYNMAN SCHOOL

feynmanschool.org

info@feynmanschool.org

301-770-4370

11810 Falls Road, Potomac, Md.

The area's leader in educating academically gifted children, Feynman School features extraordinary programs in science, math, language arts, theater and music designed to maximize your young child's potential while at the same time providing opportunities for unstructured play. We offer both half- and full-day preschool programs.

GEORGETOWN HILL EARLY SCHOOL

georgetownhill.com

14901 Dufief Mill Road,

North Potomac, Md.

With a "Play. Learning. Arts. Nurturing." approach to teaching, we've found that children thrive in an educational environment at Georgetown Hill.

LITTLE BUDS

littleleaves.org/littlebuds

info@littleleaves.org

202-420-8359

9727 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring, Md.

The Little Buds Program is a center-based ABA program for young children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder run in a preschool-like setting. It is designed for children up to age 6 who have been recommended for intensive ABA services.

ONENESS-FAMILY SCHOOL

onenessfamilymontessorischool.org

Ages 2-Grade 8; 301-652-7751

6701 Wisconsin Ave.

Chevy Chase, Md.

Oneness-Family School has been providing the very best in Montessori education since 1988. Our unique program focuses on both character and curriculum, offering a diverse international community founded on values within an academically rich environment. This enables us to prepare our students to be the global leaders of tomorrow who can think in creative and dynamic ways for an everchanging world.

SPRING BILINGUAL MONTESSORI ACADEMY

info@spring-bilingual.org

sbmaoffice@yahoo.com

301-962-7262

3514 Plyers Mill Road

Kensington, Md.

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VIRGINIA

A CHILD'S PLACE

achildsplaceinc.com

703-698-8050

3100 Prosperity Ave., Fairfax, Va.

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BROOKSFIELD SCHOOL

brooksfieldschool.org

info@brooksfieldschool.org

Ages: 2-6

703-356-5437

1830 Kirby Road, McLean, Va.

Spanish, organic gardening, art, dance, music, mindfulness and summer camp.

BURGUNDY FARM COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

burgundyfarm.org

info@burgundyfarm.org

703-960-3431

3700 Burgundy Road, Alexandria, Va.

Grades: JK-8th • Year Founded:

1946 • Coed • Enrollment: 286 • % of

Minorities: 35% • Average Class Size: 15

• Student-Teacher Ratio: 7:1 • Entrance

Exam • Foreign Languages: French,

Spanish beginning in JK • Tuition

Range: \$23,592- \$26,998 • Number of

Computers: 150 • Internet Access

Enrichment Activities • Sports • Transportation •

Extended Day • Summer Program

Burgundy provides an inclusive, creative, nurturing environment that engages the whole child. Our innovative, hands-on approach cultivates independent thinking, promotes academic excellence, instills respect for diversity, and teaches responsibility.

CAMPAGNA EARLY LEARNING

CENTER AT ST. JAMES

campnacenter.org/programs/early-childhood

pshannon@campnacenter.org

571-982-3924

5140 Fillmore Ave., Alexandria, Va.

COMMUNITY MONTESSORI SCHOOL

cmsreston.com

bonnieredcms@gmail.com

703-478-3656

1700 Reston Pkwy., Reston, VA

Ages: Infants to 6 years

Our Montessori School cherishes each child for his or her uniqueness and provides personalized, loving care that extends to encourage a child's capacity to learn and grow. Year-round primary, toddler and infant classrooms bring excitement and quality to your child's education.

THE GRIFFIN ACADEMY OF WESTMINSTER SCHOOL

westminsterschool.com

klee@westminsterschool.com

703-340-7268; Ages: 3-4

3819 Gallows Road, Annandale, Va.

The Griffin Academy of Westminster School provides a safe, creative, and loving environment in which children ages 3 and 4 can thrive. The preschool day is structured to have an equal balance of play and structure.

GUIDEPOST MONTESSORI

guidepostmontessori.com/northern-virginia

866-202-8593

24328 Marrwood Drive, Aldie, Va.

42945 Waxpool Road, Ashburn, Va.

4550 Walney Road, Chantilly, Va.

13251 Woodland Park Road, Herndon, Va.

3551 Waterway Drive, Montclair, Va.

Ages: Infant to elementary

Guidepost Montessori in Loudoun, Fairfax and Prince William counties is among a growing, worldwide network of schools that offer language immersion for ages infant through elementary.

HOLLY BROOK MONTESSORI SCHOOL

preschoolmontessori.com

info@hollybrookmontessori.com

703-573-7800; Ages: 3-6

2455 Gallows Road, Dunn Loring, Va.

Children learn in an intimate and unpretentious atmosphere, where they respect themselves and others and care for the environment around them. We offer a complete educational and social environment and utilize the discoveries and methods of Dr. Montessori.

HUNTER MILL MONTESSORI SCHOOL

preschoolmontessori.com

info@huntermillmontessori.com

703-938-7755; Ages: 2.9-6

2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton, Va.

Hunter Mill Montessori School provides an intimate and nurturing environment for 2.9-6 year olds to develop their independence through the Montessori experience. We offer a complete educational and social environment and utilize the discoveries and methods of Dr. Montessori.

LITTLE BUDS

littleleaves.org/littlebuds

info@littleleaves.org

202-420-8359

11480 Sunset Hills Road, Reston, Va.

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703.537.3003 - theJ.org/ECLC

Pozes JCC-Beth El ECLC, 3830 Seminary Rd., Alexandria
703.537.3084 - theJ.org/ECLC

Partner Agency of
The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington

in a preschool-like setting. It is designed for children up to age 6 who have been recommended for intensive ABA services.

MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF CEDAR LANE

preschoolmontessori.com
info@cedarlanemontessori.com

Ages: 3-6; 703-560-4379

3035 Cedar Ln., Fairfax, Va.

Montessori School of Cedar Lane has been providing over 45 years of Montessori tradition to Northern Virginia. We offer a complete educational and social environment and utilize the discoveries and methods of Dr. Montessori to help the child develop more fully the potential within him.

MONTESSORI SCHOOL AT GOOSE CREEK PRESERVE

goosecreekmontessori.com

Ages: 16 months to 6 years

571-417-3999

42470 Rosalind St., Ashburn, Va.

MSGCP is designed to be a place that fosters self-expression and independence for its students, fully equipped with child-accessible materials that encourage children ages

16-months to 6 to explore and learn at their own pace.

MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF MCLEAN

mcleanmontessori.org

703-790-1049

1711 Kirby Road, McLean, Va.

Ages 2 ½-12

Preschool and Elementary classes

• Foreign Languages: Spanish and French • Science & Technology • Drama • Music • P.E. • Computer • Art • Transportation • Summer Program

MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

msnv.org; info@msnv.org

703-992-0255

**Valleybrook: 3433 Rose Ln.
Falls Church, Va.**

At the Montessori School of Northern Virginia, we want the delight of discovery to last a lifetime. MSNV provides authentic Montessori education for children ages 2-12. From Preprimary through Elementary, our learning environment is designed to directly benefit social, emotional, physical and intellectual development.

NYSMITH SCHOOL FOR THE GIFTED

nysmith.com

ebalberde@nysmith.com

703-713-3332; Ages: 3 years-Grade 8.

12625 EDS Drive, Herndon, Va.

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PINECREST SCHOOL

pinecrestschool.org

admissions@pinecrestschool.org

Ages: 3-4; 703-354-3446

7209 Quiet Cove, Annandale, Va.

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RESTON MONTESSORI SCHOOL

restonmontessori.com

office@restonmontessori.com

703-481-2922 ; Ages: 3 months-

Grade 6

1928 Isaac Newton Sq. West

Reston, Va.

Established in 1986, Reston Montessori School is a private, co-educational school for children from 3 months through 6th grade.

SUNSET HILLS MONTESSORI SCHOOL

sunsethillsmontessori.com

office@sunsethillsmontessori.com

703-476-7477

Ages: 18 months-13 years

11180 Ridge Heights Road, Reston, Va.

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Healthy Eyes for School

BY IRENE MYERS-THOMPSON

With school back in full swing, it is an ideal time to get your child's eyes checked.

Good eye health is important, in part because 80 percent of what children learn is through their eyes, according to the American Optometric Association. The AOA recommends that a child's first comprehensive eye exam should occur between 6 months and 12 months, again at age 3 and before entering school at age 5 or 6.

However, despite these recommendations, more than one-third of Americans incorrectly believe children should receive a first comprehensive eye exam at age 5 or later, according to a recent UnitedHealthcare survey.

The inability to see clearly can affect a child's physical, emotional and social development, which in turn can affect academic and athletic performance and, ultimately, self-esteem. Many times children are unaware and won't complain if their vision isn't normal, so it's important to look for possible signs of vision problems. Also, it's important to remember that a school's vision screening is not a substitute for a comprehensive eye exam. Vision screenings at school usually focus on measuring acuity levels and can miss common conditions such as poor eye alignment, focusing problems and farsightedness.

As you take care of your child's school shopping, any needed immunizations and more, schedule an appointment for your child to receive a comprehensive eye examination, especially if he or she experiences any of the following:

- **Difficulty hitting or catching a ball:** If your child regularly misses or drops the ball, it's possible that vision impairment might be affecting hand-eye coordination. This could also be due to a lazy eye, otherwise known as amblyopia.

Amblyopia is when one eye is favored over the other, which can affect depth perception, making it difficult to assess objects in front of you.

- **Squinting while reading or watching television:** Ask your child if the text or screen is blurry or if reading gives them a headache. A "yes" answer could indicate an underlying vision problem.
- **Issues watching 3D movies:** 3D movies require eyes to work together as a team to process information, so difficulty viewing 3D content can be a sign of underlying vision issues. After watching a 3D movie, look to see if your child feels any discomfort or dizziness or is unable to process 3D content.

Also, watch for digital eye strain, which is caused by prolonged use of computers, smartphones and tablets, can cause symptoms such as sore, tired, watery or dry eyes, headache or sore neck, shoulder or back. Help your child practice healthy vision habits by keeping computer screens at least 30 inches away from their eyes, resting their eyes every 20 minutes and blinking frequently to avoid dry eyes. Practice the 20/20/20 rule: every 20 minutes, take 20 seconds and look at something 20 feet away.

In addition, a comprehensive eye exam can uncover other health conditions not usually associated with the eyes, including multiple sclerosis, diabetes, high blood pressure, juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, elevated cholesterol and Crohn's disease.

Make an appointment for your child now as part of this year's school routine. Together with your child's eye doctor, you can help make sure your child is ready for school and ready to learn.

Irene Myers-Thompson is the wellness director of UnitedHealthcare of Mid-Atlantic.



Many times children are unaware and won't complain if their vision isn't normal, so it's important to look for possible signs of vision problems.



EYE EXAM: GETTY IMAGES/E+/ANDRES;
ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES PLUS/SURADECH14



When one person's voice is raised, it's reciprocated, and pretty quickly, no matter the topic, the point of conversation is lost.

Stirring Up Peace in the Home, Complete with Love and Mutual Respect

BY KATHRYN STREETER

With all the confrontation and strife around us, who doesn't wish for a more peaceful world? I've watched people become embroiled in polarizing issues and hope that they're paying attention to the sphere of influence where they are in control. As one concerned parent, I've decided to look first into the place where I can directly stir up peace: my own home. Here are some straightforward tips to help encourage other parents in the realm where they hold significant influence.

Resist yelling around the house, no matter the size of your home. Walk into the next room and talk face-to-face with your child.

With her characteristic transparency Lori Borgman, grandmother of 11, syndicated columnist and author of, "I Was A Better Mother Before I Had Kids," pleads guilty to sometimes raising her voice around the home. But, she says, that though it may be momentarily expedient, in the long run, it's "a horrible habit to develop." So, if we mess up from time to time, don't give in. Work intentionally — like Borgman does — to prevent this oops from morphing into a hardened habit.

"Face-to-face is always better," says high school counselor Susan Childs, noting that when one person's voice is raised, it's reciprocated, and pretty quickly, no matter the topic, the point of conversation is lost. Meredith Bodgas, mother and editor-in-chief of WorkingMother.com agrees that the message is affected by its delivery: "Get down on their level so you're talking to them, not at them or above them. Not only will they be more inclined to listen to what you're saying but you'll also be less inclined to raise your voice since you'll be so close to their little face."

It's tempting, but no interrupting or finishing your kids' sentences. Be silent. Let them finish all their thoughts. It's likely your kids will be more apt to return in kind and listen fully to you.

When your child asks a question or invites your opinion, weigh-in, but be brief. Don't say everything on your mind. Short and sweet will stay with them longer.

Bodgas addresses the need for two-way communication, suggesting asking your child "What do you think?" after you've spoken. "It gives your kid a platform to civilly share what's on his mind and allows for a difference of opinion, since you invited him to speak up. Both lead to healthy discourse."

Childs says kids are often asking for something simple and, missing the point, we go way too deep. She uses the example of your child asking where kids come from, a question ensuring a parent's flurry to unleash their rehearsed birds-and-bees speech, only to hear, "Oh, well, Bobby said he came from Cleveland." This story illustrates the point that as parents we answer too fully, engaging our adult brains when answering our children's questions. Instead, Childs suggests, "don't elaborate too much unless they ask for more." Use your sixth sense to feel them out if they want to keep talking; otherwise, stop, Childs recommends.

Love is action-oriented. Show up on time. Don't be late to pick your kids up or be the cause of leaving late for school. You are communicating your love when you show up on time.

It's a matter of respect, Childs adds, to show up for your child when you say you will, no matter their age. Non-driving high schoolers feel it, too. "It's just rude to be late to a meeting, so why wouldn't it be the same when we don't show up for our kids?" Childs says. "As adults, we try not to be late and show rudeness, so why wouldn't we do the same for our kids?"

Childs' perspective is seasoned, informed and personal, coming from years of school counseling experience. "Just don't be late for your kids, not to mention that after-school staff has to wait — someone has to wait — with your child until you arrive. It's a situation that snowballs." She reminds us that our tardiness makes our child stand out. "Your disrespect is felt by child and school staff."

Parents, Childs continues, are constantly searching for ways to help their children grow up to be respectful, kind and hardworking members of society, but that a child's first introduction to respectful behavior comes from us, repeating the adage, "It starts at home." She counsels to do as we'd like our kids to do and to make home a haven, a "place of calm for our kids."

It's not a simple world to navigate, for sure, and it's certainly easy to get swept up in the latest flavor of controversy without making forward progress. How sweet and satisfying it is, then, to watch how small changes around the home can yield disproportionately large results. ■

Kathryn Streeter is a Washington, D.C.-based mom and blogger.

A close-up, high-quality photograph of a dog's face, likely a Weimaraner, with brown and white fur and striking light-colored eyes. The dog is looking slightly to the left of the camera.

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